



Homeland Security

IT Program Assessment CBP – Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)

Review

The DHS Chief Information Officer conducted a comprehensive review of the CBP Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) program on June 9, 2010. WHTI is the joint Department of State (DOS) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) initiative to implement a key 9/11 Commission recommendation and the statutory mandates of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA), which established document requirements for travelers entering the United States who were previously exempt, including citizens of the U.S., Canada, and Bermuda.

Prior to implementation of WHTI, U.S. and Canadian citizens were not required to present travel documents when crossing land borders to enter the U.S., but WHTI changed those requirements. Now all travelers must present a passport or other authorized travel document when entering the United States. The WHTI program helped increase the speed and efficiency of inspections by reducing the number of acceptable travel document types for citizens of the U.S., Canada, and Bermuda entering the United States to 6, rather than the prior 8,000 acceptable document types, and by redesigning land points of entry with RFID-enabled document readers and analyzers.

WHTI immediately experienced an exceptionally high compliance rate, which is attributable in large part to the WHTI Program Management's Office (PMO) extensive outreach and communication. The PMO successfully spread awareness and education about the changing policy and the new requirements so that the general public adopted quickly. WHTI also provided a user-friendly system that enhanced ease of analysis and improved reporting capabilities.

The WHTI program appears to be well-funded and well-managed, with risks and issues identified and being effectively mitigated. The program has effectively delivered capabilities to the field that significantly enhance the ability of CBP Officers to effectively, efficiently, and securely manage the entry of U.S., Canadian, and Bermudan citizens seeking entry to the U.S., and has effectively met the mandates under which the WHTI program was founded.

Assessment

WHTI has successfully delivered its objectives while maintaining schedule and cost goals. Executive sponsorship was a key factor in the PMO's ability to execute WHTI on time and within budget. Currently, the program is in a state of operation and maintenance (O&M). The PMO has a good vision for addressing future needs and instills confidence in its ability to perform effectively.

Score: 5